REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 6 through 10, 24 through 30, 32, 33, and 36 through 39 are pending. Claims 3 through 5, 11 through 23, 31, 34, 35, and 40 to 45 have been cancelled in this national phase conversion under 35 U.S.C. 371(c) of PCT/GB03/01283 without prejudice or disclaimer.

In regards to the rejection of the claims noted in the International Preliminary Examination Report, the Applicants disagree with the Examiner's contention that the prior art discloses each element of the claimed invention, either alone or in combination. For example, claim 1 includes "the radius of curvature along the narrowest part of the narrower mid-portion of the inner periphery of the guide recess being always larger than the radius of curvature along the end lobe portion of the outer periphery of the guide recess." As shown in Figures 4a through 4c of the pending application, the claimed form of the guide recess is such as to provide a reduced rate of change of acceleration at a critical time or critical times during maximum power generation. Nothing in the cited references discloses the selection of the radius of curvature along the narrowest part of the narrower mid-portion of the inner periphery of the guide recess being always larger than the radius of curvature along the end lobe portion of the outer periphery of the guide recess, nor that the use of such selection can be used to provide a reduced rate of change of acceleration at a critical time or critical times during maximum power generation. The Examiner's argument is essentially that the skilled man might have arranged the slot in such a manner – however, this fails to render the claimed invention obvious, as the cited prior art discloses that the skilled man would not have recognized or had any understanding of the effects of the predominant radii of curvature on piston movement. As such, the cited art fails to provide a prima facie basis for the rejection of the claims, as it fails to disclose each element of the claimed invention. Allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

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